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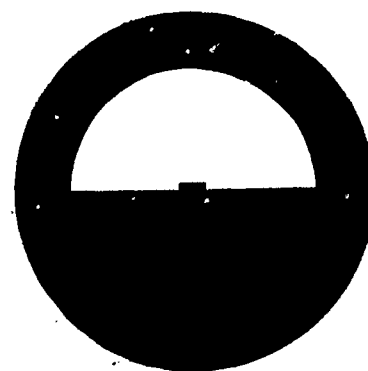
ABSTRACT

This report presents the recommendations of a task force appointed to examine ways to improve the coordination, effectiveness, and quality of education experiences for migrant children and their families. After tracing the history and background of the migrant education program, the report discusses the current conditions and future expectations of migrant education in concert with the six national education goals. The expectations for migrant education are: (1) migrant students should enter the first grade fully prepared to learn and schools should be fully prepared to help them; (2) between 1992 and 2002, the number of migrant students graduating from high school should increase annually by 10 percent; (3) migrant students should complete the elementary grades with critical skills in learning and complete the middle school grades and enter high school with specified abilities; (4) migrant students should be provided stimulating learning experiences in science, math, and technology education, and every state department of education should have successful strategies for providing such schooling; (5) migrant students should achieve an academic level for postsecondary education, employment, or both, upon graduating from high school, and out-of-school migrant youth and adults should be provided basic literacy education; (6) migrant students should attend schools that are free of drug and alcohol, where students are healthy and safe. The report discusses specific issues and opportunities for action related to meeting the six national education goals and migrant education expectations. (LP)

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Rethinking Migrant Education

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A Response to the National Education Goals

What's in a logo?

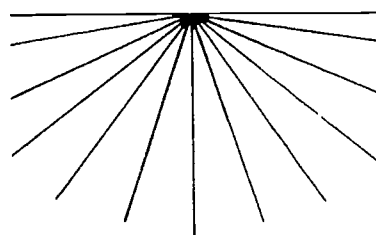
BACKGROUND

The logo for migrant education was introduced at the 1974 National Conference on Migrant Education. The migrant education logo was designed using symbols for the various aspects of a migrant student's life and education.



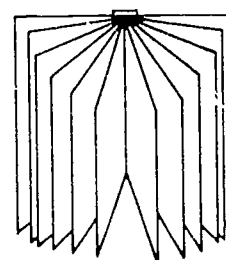
A FIELD

Migrant students are generally well acquainted with land containing rows of crops stretching toward the horizon. The converging lines at the bottom of the migrant education logo represent those fields. Therefore, those lines are also symbols of that portion of a migrant student's life and education associated with the productivity and the hard labor of farm work. In the color version of the logo the field is green.



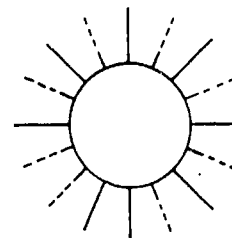
A BOOK

Although a great deal of a migrant student's education takes place in the fields, the classroom is the place where the important academic learning originates. Much of that classroom learning is associated with books. In other words, the fields must at sometime be replaced by books for the migrant student to prepare most successfully for the future. Therefore, the field in the logo also represents a partially opened book, seen from the top. The furrows are the pages of the book.



THE SUN

The pages of the book and the rows of crops lead to a blank horizon, as study and hard work lead to a future of wide-open possibilities. The yellow half-circle above the horizon is a representation of the sun. The sun represents not only the hot sun associated with work in the fields, but also the bright light of knowledge and success awaiting the student who is allowed to earn an education.



Rethinking Migrant Education

A Response to the National Education Goals

A Report of the
Migrant Education Goals Task Force
National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education

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March 1992

National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education

History of the Migrant Education Program

The migrant education program is based on the premise that poverty, mobility and school achievement are related, that children who are both poor and migratory are more likely to have difficulty in school. Consequently, they are more likely to need extra help in compensating for the effects that a mobile lifestyle has had on their learning.

In an attempt to counter the discontinuity of education stemming from the migratory way of life, in 1966 the United States Congress established the national migrant education program under the authority of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Initially, the migrant education program made funds available for supplemental instruction and support services in health and nutrition for the school-aged children of migratory agricultural workers only. In later years, the program extended services to the children of migratory fishers, and children whose parents migrate to cultivate and harvest America's forests.

Another change permitted migrant children to continue to participate in the program for up to six years after their families had ceased to migrate. This provision was made to assist those "settled out" or "formerly migratory" students in making the education transition — to help them catch up in those academic areas in which they might have fallen behind while their families moved in search of work.

The most recent change to the program under the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, expanded the age range of students served from 5-17 to 3-21. This change recognizes the importance of early childhood programs and the need for continued services beyond the normal age of high school graduation for this group of severely disadvantaged young people.

The national migrant education program also funds a Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), located in Little Rock, Arkansas. This computerized telecommunications system collects and maintains academic and health records on children participating in the program, and facilitates the transfer of records among school districts.

The MSRTS was developed to promote education sequence and continuity for migrant children regardless of how often and where they might move. When a migrant student moves into a new school district, the child's records are forwarded to the enrolling school, by the MSRTS. The records include information about the child's family, schools previously attended, skills mastered, test scores, credit accrual, and basic health.

Providing educational services alongside the migrant education program are the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). These programs were established by the United States Congress to address the needs of students whose migratory employment patterns often conflict with their ability to successfully complete secondary and post-secondary education opportunities. The HEP and CAMP programs were administered by the United States Department of Labor prior to the establishment of the United States Department of Education in 1980. Since 1980, the HEP and CAMP programs have been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education's Office of Migrant Education, along with the Chapter 1 migrant education program.

The High School Equivalency Program provides an alternative for migrant and seasonal farm worker youths who drop out of school, preparing them to successfully take the General Education Development (GED) examination, resulting in the equivalent of a high school diploma. The College Assistance Migrant Program, administered in selected universities, offers tutoring, financial aid and other services to migrant students in their first year of college to assist them in obtaining a college education.





National Education Goals and "America 2000"

America's Education Goals

By the year 2000:

1. All children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. American students will leave grades four, eight and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography (and leave school) prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern world.
4. U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
5. Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
6. Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

America 2000

In support of those goals, President Bush announced April 1991 a four-part strategy:

1. For Today's Students: Better and More Accountable Schools.
2. For Tomorrow's Students: A New Generation of American Schools.
3. For the Rest of Us (Yesterday's Students): A Nation of Students.
4. Communities Where Learning Can Happen.

Introduction

Background

Because migrant children move with their families following the seasonal crops and waterways, they must adjust to frequent changes in location, teachers, classmates, and curriculum. Just as their life is itinerant, so is their education. To be a child of migrant workers is to be caught up in the abuses and neglect of poverty and migration. The special needs of migrant children have been identified in national literature and in reports on migrant workers throughout the United States and a consistent finding is that the migrant lifestyle limits educational opportunities and growth. Low achievement rates and high dropout rates are especially acute among migrant students.

Our Focus

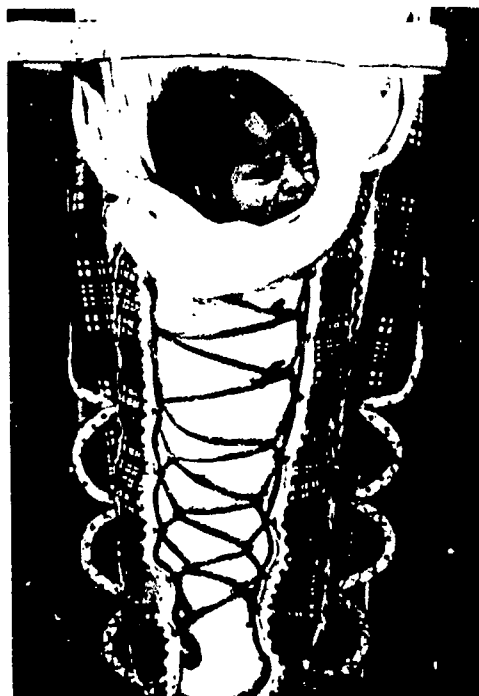
In June 1990, the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) appointed a committee to examine ways to improve the coordination, effectiveness, and quality of educational experiences for migrant children and their families. The committee was later reorganized as the Migrant Education Goals Task Force and given an additional charge of redefining the goals for migrant education in concert with the six goals for American education agreed to by the President and the nation's governors.

The task force developed a mission statement and twelve expectations for the education of migrant children and youth. These have been adopted by NASDME. The expectations are the same as we would expect for any child. They are based on the belief that all children can learn and all children should have equal access to schools where they can progress and learn. They are also based on the belief that schools cannot ignore the social and economic conditions from which their students come — education can be the beginning in breaking the cycle of poverty from parents to children.

This report represents the culmination of discussions and meetings conducted by the task force. During the 1991 National Conference on Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Buffalo, New York, the task force convened a series of forums to discuss the six National Education Goals. These discussions allowed the task force to solicit the views of a wide spectrum of people actively involved in the education of migrant students — parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, recruiters and health professionals. These forums provided an opportunity for participants to carefully consider the National Education Goals, to postulate strategies for achieving these goals for migrant children, and to candidly share ideas about problems, practices, and emerging trends that challenge migrant educators and schools throughout the nation. This report shares some of what we heard in these forums.

This report is organized around the six national goals for education and the twelve expectations for the education of migrant children and youth. It discusses several of the salient themes and issues that emerged from the Buffalo forums, background research, and our task force meetings. Outlined in the report are *opportunities* for innovation, reflection, and action designed to improve the quality and effectiveness of educational experiences for migrant children and their families. Central to our approach is a *rethinking* of some of the basic premises about educating migrant children. We focus attention on early childhood education, prevention, and family support systems. We also focus attention on issues of equity, access, and quality.

While the National Association of State Directors have had a significant hand in shaping this document, they have not been asked to vote on specific language. Members of the task force are responsible for the views presented in this report. The task force suggests that the report be a starting point for national discussion and reflection about what matters in the education of migrant children and their families.



Expectations for the Education of Migrant Children and Youth.

Our mission as educators of migrant children is to ensure that all efforts to achieve the National Education Goals will equitably include all migrant children.

This mission statement, adopted by the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education on April 28, 1991, is intended to be the banner of a comprehensive effort among the states for achieving the national education goals for migrant children. Twelve expectations for the education of migrant children and youth have been developed that lay out a vision for achieving the national education goals. Accomplishing each expectation will require schools to work in closer partnership with parents, health and social services agencies, the Migrant Student Record Transfer System, farmworker organizations, businesses, and the community at large. Accomplishing the twelve expectations will also require schools and the Migrant Education Program to continue to take the lead in reaching out to develop collaborative partnerships and a sense of "shared mission," which will encourage and nurture lasting commitments for the education of migrant children. The twelve expectations are:

Expectation One:

Migrant children should enter first grade fully prepared to learn and schools should be fully prepared to help them learn.

Expectation Two:

The cultural and language diversity represented by migrant students should be used positively and creatively within schools and communities.

Expectation Three:

Between 1992 and 2002, the number of migrant students graduating from high school should increase annually by 10 percent.

Expectation Four:

Migrant students should complete the elementary grades with mastery of critical skills in learning to read, write, compute, and think.

Expectation Five:

Migrant students should complete the middle school grades able to reason critically and understand the relevance to their lives the subject matter they are learning.

Expectation Six:

Migrant students entering high school should be able to complete their educations and graduate successfully.

Expectation Seven:

Migrant students should be provided stimulating learning experiences in science, mathematics, and technology education as they proceed through their school years.

Expectation Eight:

The academic achievement of migrant students should be at a level that will enable them upon graduation from high school, to be prepared for post-secondary education, employment or both.

Expectation Nine:

Migrant students who do not choose college should be provided school-to-work transition experiences so they leave high school prepared with the skills necessary to participate productively in the world of work and with the foundation required to upgrade their skills and advance their employment and career opportunities.

Expectation Ten:

Adults and out-of-school migrant youth should be provided quality experiences and opportunities to improve their literacy, basic education, and problem solving skills.

Expectation Eleven:

Migrant children should attend schools that are free of drugs and alcohol and where students are well nourished and healthy, feel safe, and learn in a supportive and caring environment.

Expectation Twelve:

Every state department of education should have a successful comprehensive strategy for migrant children and youth that provides a process to bring about quality, equity, and congruence in their education.



America 2000 Goal 1

By the Year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

Some Migrant Health Facts

- The infant mortality rate among migrants is 25 percent higher than the national average.
- Poor nutrition causes pre- and post-partum deaths, anemia, extreme dental problems, and poor mental and physical development of children.
- Birth injuries result in many cases of cerebral palsy and mental retardation.
- More than 15,000 pregnant women received maternity care at migrant health centers during 1987.
- In 1988, one half of all health centers surveyed by the National Institute of Medicine reported reducing obstetrical services because the cost has exceeded their ability to finance care.

Excerpts from Fact Sheet:
Maternal and Child Health
National Migrant Resource
Program, Inc., 1990.

Expectations For Migrant Children And Youth

Migrant children should enter first grade fully prepared to learn and schools should be fully prepared to help them learn.

The cultural and language diversity represented by migrant students should be used positively and creatively within schools and communities.

WHAT WE KNOW

We know that children grow and learn from the moment they are born. The first five years of life are a crucial period of human development. In these early years children acquire the fundamental building blocks of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. A child's earliest experiences can provide a solid foundation for later physical health, emotional well-being, loving human relationships, and productive achievement.

We know that a child's experience during these early years significantly affect later school success. Research findings and documented practices indicate that children whose basic needs for health care, adequate nutrition, a safe environment, loving caregivers, and appropriate developmental stimulation are met are more likely to complete high school, attend college, and secure jobs.

We know that children born into poverty, children whose first language is not English, children with disabilities, and children raised in overly stressful family circumstances often experience serious developmental problems and do not begin school as ready as their more advantaged classmates. As a consequence, they are at risk of early school failure and many drop out before completing high school.

We know that the seeds for educational failure are planted even before birth and is exacerbated during the infant and toddler years. A growing body of research and experience by experts in child development and medicine has increased our knowledge of how to prevent damage to young children and how to give them a healthy and secure start in life. Prenatal care, adequate nutrition, immunizations, appropriate health care and supervision, safe shelter, early education, family support, and strong social networks are a few of the important ingredients. Research and experience also indicate that early and sustained intervention into the lives of disadvantaged children have a positive impact on later school achievement.

We know that home is the place where children's early development unfolds, and the family is the context in which their development is supported and sustained. Parents are and will remain their children's first and most important teachers, providers, and caregivers. However, children who grow up in families that do not adequately meet their basic developmental needs can face obstacles to their success in school. Children's difficulties are further compounded when their families have limited choices for employment or training and limited access to health care, child care, social programs, and other support services that would help keep their children physically healthy and provide adequate nutrition.

We know that when parents are informed and confident in supporting their child's early learning and development, they can powerfully enhance school readiness. According to a report by the National Governor's Association (Odden, 1986), the "curriculum of the home" and what parents do to help their children learn is more important to academic success than how well-off the family is. Research on both gifted and disadvantaged children shows that home efforts can greatly improve student achievement. For example, when parents of disadvantaged children create a "curriculum of the home" that encourages daily conversations, household routines, attention to everyday events, and affectionate concern for their children's progress, their children can do just as well as the children of more affluent families. Parents who are active in early childhood education are also prepared to participate in their child's elementary school education.

We know that it is less costly to society and to individuals to prevent early failure through efforts directed toward parents and children alike from prenatal care through age five. Research studies indicate a clear need to place greater emphasis on preventing problems. Obviously, the easiest problems to remedy are those that never occur in the first place. Such preventive approaches require the active participation of both the children and their parents.

WHERE WE ARE

IN PROVIDING MIGRANT CHILDREN AN EARLY AND HEALTHY START FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

Key Questions

1. What maternal and child health services are available to migrant mothers? Are these services adequate?
2. How many migrant children receive early education and child care services that are developmentally, culturally, and language appropriate?
3. What kinds of family literacy programs are available to migrant parents and their young children? Do these programs promote children and parents learning together?

Maternal and Child Health

Throughout the nation, the health concerns of migrant children and their parents are painfully evident. According to a recent study of migrant health status (Dever, 1991), demographic patterns, socio-economic conditions, life style characteristics, and disease categories of the migrant population reflect agrarian third world

conditions. The results of the study indicated that the migrant population is at greater risk and suffers more problems than the general population due to factors such as poverty, malnutrition, infectious and parasitic diseases, poor education, a young population, and poor housing.

The expectant migrant mother faces great obstacles in obtaining early and continuous prenatal care. The migratory lifestyle, geographical isolation, language barriers, and lack of financial resources or health insurance limit access to maternal and child health care. Poor living and working conditions complicated by inadequate nutrition place the expectant migrant mother at tremendous risk for poor pregnancy outcome. The Migrant Clinician Network has identified the problem of inadequate prenatal care as a priority for the 1990's.

Migrant children and their parents have limited access to health care. Many farmworker communities and migrant labor camps are so isolated from the general community that health services are not readily available. In many rural communities health care providers are scarce, and their time, talents, caseload, and funds are stretched to the breaking point. The migrant health centers across the county are able to provide care to less than 20 percent of migrant workers and their families.

Many recent indicators of child health and well-being in the rural communities where migrants live are troubling. Years of improvement in maternal and child health care have reversed in the last decade, reflecting the combined effects of poor economic conditions, the difficulty of attracting health professionals to isolated areas, and cutbacks in some federal health programs. Federal maternal and child health programs such as

Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), are reaching fewer than half of eligible beneficiaries.

Early Education and Child Care

There is probably no population more in need of early education and care than children of migrant workers. Most migrant family members who are old enough must work to supplement the family income. Many migrant mothers go back to work as soon as possible after their babies are born. Unless child care and preschool programs are available, infants and young children are often left unattended in the fields, alone in camps, or in care of older siblings.

Over the years, a diverse array of early education and care arrangements for young migrant children has developed. These vary from informal arrangements in the homes of relatives and neighbors to formal programs in schools, churches, and child care centers. Unfortunately, not all migrant families have access to formal child care and child development services. And when these programs exist, some parents lack the time, knowledge, and financial resources to locate and secure a place for their children.

The mobility of migrant children presents a formidable obstacle to their enrollment in early education and care programs in the communities where their families travel. Many of these programs are on a "first come and first serve" basis and have waiting lists. Migrant children may be long gone by the time a space becomes available.

The federal government's Migrant Head Start program attempts to compensate for the many disadvantages experienced by migrant children. Migrant Head Start provides comprehensive services to children from birth through age 5 and their families. The Migrant Head Start programs are known as comprehensive program models because they offer families not only an educational program, but health and nutrition, parent involvement, and social services. Current funding for this program is only adequate enough to serve about 16 percent of eligible preschool migrant youngsters in the 30 states where the programs operate.

Enrollment information in the Migrant Student Record Transfer System for the 1990-1991 school year indicates that the migrant education program is providing early education programs to nearly 22 percent of 91,371 children ages 0-5 in the system. The migrant education program assisted in providing health services to 10 percent of these students, nutritional services to 11 percent, and dental services to 3.5 percent.

Happily, there is now a growing public awareness of the need to work with disadvantaged children before they enter first grade. Early intervention and quality preschool education is emerging as a leading issue as states focus on the nation's first educational goal to prepare children to start school ready to learn. Preschool programs have become an educational priority in almost half the states. Texas, New York, California, and Washington are making universal preschool for the disadvantaged a key element of their statewide education reform efforts. As such initiatives unfold, more migrant youngsters will have the benefit of preschool programs.

For example, the Texas migrant education program has been redesigned with a special focus on preschool because a new state program provides compensatory preschool education to all children, including migrant children.

Variances in Preschool Services

As migrant families move in and out of communities, they experience differences in the quality and kinds of early education and care available to them and their children. In a number of school districts, the mandatory age for school attendance starts beyond the early education years. As a result, there are wide variances in the types of programs offered and the qualifications of service providers. Many school districts have no programs for three to five year old children, and child care services provided by community agencies and organizations are scarce in the rural communities where migrant families work.

Kindergartens are becoming increasingly academic, and in many districts they are introducing the traditional first-grade curriculum a year earlier. In other districts, kindergartens remain primarily developmentally appropriate. Thus, as migrant children move across school districts, they experience different content expectations. Many migrant children who begin in a kindergarten, wind up being labeled as remedial students even before they have begun their first year in school!

A still greater educational problem for many migrant children is the inability of many schools and preschools to provide culturally and developmentally appropriate programs. Children whose home language is not English are often immersed in English language acquisition and wind up mastering neither language.

A growing problem has arisen among recent immigrant migrant children which adds a new perspective to the concept of "readiness to learn." Unfortunately, many of these children are entering schools with little or no formal education from their countries of origin or with gaps in their learning caused by a variety of circumstances over which they have no control. Regardless of the reasons, these children are faced with entering preschools and schools without adequate preparatory education in their native languages and are confronted with unfamiliar environments in which they may also have great difficulty communicating.

Many migrant children begin school without the learning and social skills required to succeed in the present school system. In the earliest years of school, children are separated by perceptions of their abilities. Teacher expectations are often low for migrant children. About one-third of all migrant children who attend kindergarten are either retained or placed in a "transition class" instead of being promoted to first grade (Morse 1991). Ability testing of children can begin as early as the pre-kindergarten level. Migrant children are frequently placed in low-ability or remedial tracks for which it is nearly impossible to escape.

Standards of Quality

Standards of quality in early childhood programs have been well defined. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has developed a set of criteria that described how any good program should look, feel, and sound (NAEYC, 1986). In many states, no recognized standard of quality for early education exists.

Barriers to Appropriate Preschool Services

- *Limited availability of public preschool programs for migrant children.*
- *Inadequate availability of culturally appropriate curriculum and materials. Inadequate numbers of culturally qualified staff and too many English-only activities.*
- *Developmentally inappropriate language practices resulting from lack of bilingual staff, emphasis on English language only, and lack of understanding of the linguistic needs of the child with limited proficiency in English.*
- *Limited participation of parents because of language barriers, demands of work, transportation difficulties, and incapacity for dealing with educational institutions.*
- *Limited skills of parents for teaching children resulting from illiteracy, language barriers, mobility, and lack of time and opportunity to attend classes.*
- *Overemphasis on academic curriculum as compared to developmentally appropriate activities.*

National Preschool Coordination Projects, Office of Migrant Education, California State Department of Education, 1991.

Preschool education can make a difference in the lives of migrant children, but doesn't always. Low quality preschool education, like poor quality care, can have damaging outcomes. Programs that are formal in nature, focus on the acquisition and rote learning of discrete academic skills, overemphasize teacher-directed instruction, and compare children on the basis of their academic performance, transmit "learned stupidity" (Katz, 1988). Such preschool programs make children dependent on others for their sense of self-worth (Elkind, 1986). In the long run, they jeopardize children's future academic achievement and increase the incidence of maladjustment and stress (Moore & Moore, 1974).

High quality preschool programs that promote children's interest in learning, trust in adults, sense of self-worth, and independence have low teacher-child ratios, developmentally appropriate curricula, and close connections with the home. They ensure the health and safety of children and hold themselves publicly accountable for achieving their stated goals.

Family Centered Education

Migrant families in various parts of the country are going to school together as a result of the federally funded program called Even Start. Parents who have not completed their high school education and their children below the age of eight are attending programs that integrate adult education with early childhood education in a family literacy framework. The goal of Even Start programs is to improve the educational opportunities for families headed by under educated adults and to help parents develop and enhance strategies that support their children's academic abilities.

Even Start is "family-focused" rather than parent- or child-focused. That is, Even Start projects must provide participating families with an integrated program of early childhood education, adult basic skills training, and parenting education. The theory is that these components build on each other and therefore families need to receive all three services, not just one or two, in order to effect lasting change and improve children's school success.

At present 9 states are providing family-centered education projects through the Migrant Education Even Start Program. These states are: Arizona, California, Kansas, Idaho, Louisiana, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Washington. These projects serve approximately 575 children.

In addition to the Even Start program, a number of family literacy programs have emerged. The Family English Literacy Program at the U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages affairs provides funding to family literacy programs around the country. The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy awards grants to help establish family literacy efforts. As these and other public and private sector funded family centered literacy programs take hold in more and more states and local communities across the country, they open new doors for migrant parents and migrant advocacy groups. For example, in 1990 the Delmarva Rural Ministries of Dover, Delaware received a grant from the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy to establish programs for migrant workers and low-income rural residents at 20 migrant camps in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

Efforts such as Even Start and other family literacy programs help states and local communities directly address two of the National Education Goals. Goal 1 calls for all children in America to start school ready to learn. An objective of Goal 1 is for every parent to be a child's first teacher, to devote time each day to helping his or her preschool child learn, and to have access to training and support. Family centered literacy programs also contribute to achieving Goal 5 — that every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Opportunities for Innovation

- We challenge schools to be ready to accommodate the strengths and weaknesses of incoming migrant students. If we neglect the issue of schools' readiness on the assumption that children should fit the school, we run the risk of emphasizing migrant children's deficits — that the child is "broken" and must be fixed. We cannot ignore the experiences in childhood that often produce conditions that predetermine the likelihood of developmental delay and unsatisfactory performance in school. When there is a mismatch between young children's capabilities and the school's demands, the school itself needs to be "fixed" to work with migrant children in a developmentally appropriate way.
- We challenge schools to develop collaborative arrangements with local resources that provide valuable support to migrant families. There is little evidence that the schools migrant youngsters attend feel any kinship or common purpose with the health and social services systems, the community organizations, or the informal networks of support that serve migrant children and their families. Migrant children bring challenges and problems that, in many cases, school staff have not been trained to face. In many schools, migrant education funded staff have provided leadership in connecting students with these services on an as need basis. In other schools, local agencies are a vital part of a community educational team. We believe strongly that local schools must take the lead in reaching out to develop collaborative partnerships and a sense of "shared mission," which will encourage and nurture lasting commitments.
- We challenge schools to marshal community resources, not only after migrant children begin school but during infancy and early childhood. The migrant education program and schools should work cooperatively to develop close partnerships with Migrant Head Start, and other early childhood and kindergarten programs to ensure the continuity needed during a child's transition between these services.
- We challenge schools and the migrant education program to establish "one-stop" parent resource centers in cooperation with health and social service agencies, head start and other early childhood programs, family literacy programs, the High School Equivalency Program, and other programs. These centers should be located in areas near migrant communities to give parents ready access to

education, health and social services. These centers could serve to connect parents to information necessary for them to become active participants in education planning and decision making and provide opportunities to involve and engage them in their youngsters' education and development.

Opportunities for Reflection

- Preschool programs for migrant children must be culturally, developmentally, and linguistic appropriate.
- Parents of migrant children must be provided training and support to assist their children to be ready to succeed in school.
- Migrant educators must take special effort to reduce the rate of retention of migrant children in kindergarten and first grade.
- Special efforts must be made to identify preschool migrant children and enroll them in programs.
- Special efforts must be made easing and strengthening the home-to-school transition.

Opportunities for Action

- Expand Migrant Head Start. Increased funding of this program would substantially increase comprehensive early education and care to migrant children 0-5 and their families.
- Develop standards of quality for migrant education preschool programs. High-quality programs have long-term benefits for children. Coordinate the development of standards with Migrant Head Start, and other early childhood and kindergarten programs.
- Expand Community and Migrant Health Centers. Increased funding would expand clinics to underserved areas.

America 2000 Goal 2

By the Year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

Expectations For Migrant Children And Youth

Between 1992 and 2002, the number of migrant students graduating from high school should increase annually by 10 percent.

WHAT WE KNOW

We know that all children are capable of succeeding in school. Children must first enter school fully prepared to learn. Schools must be ready to provide for and accommodate children's optimum learning with appropriate materials, effective teaching, time on task, and positive learning experience.

We know that the seeds of educational failure are planted early. Although the ultimate causes of educational failure may vary significantly from child to child, most educators believe that as early as third grade we can predict with a high degree of accuracy which children will graduate and which will drop out. The patterns of behavior that lead to school failure and dropping out begin to appear during infancy and the toddler years. If small children do not gain a sense of security, a capacity for human connections, and the foundations of cognitive skill in their first few years, the road before them is made that much more difficult.

We know that there are many factors why children fail in school and eventually dropout. Children who are poor, children whose first language is not English, children with disabilities, and children raised in overly stressful family circumstances have a heightened risk of academic failure and leaving school before graduation.

We know that the world of childhood is changing. Many more children are growing up in single-parent families. At least one in four preschoolers (and one in five children under 18) lives in poverty. We also know that one in every four poor Americans live in a rural area, and one of every four rural children is poor. (*Rural poverty is extensive and persistent among the families of migrant workers nationwide.*)

We know that poverty and educational achievement are closely linked. As noted by former U.S. Commissioner of Education, Harold Howe II (1991), "poverty is the parent of school failure, job failure, emotional imbalance, and social rejection — even though poverty-stricken parents have high expectations for their youngsters." Poor students are three times more likely to become dropouts than students who are more affluent. Schools with higher concentrations of poor students have significantly higher dropout rates than schools with fewer poor students (Hahn, Hanzberger, and Lefkowitz, 1987).

We know that students who drop out tend to have few educational resources in the home and less support for academic achievement, and they spend less time doing homework. Parents who do not speak English may be severely hampered in their ability to help their children with their schoolwork or in their ability to assist their children's school career.

We know that students do not make a sudden, conscience decision to leave school at the age of fifteen or sixteen; the act of dropping out is the culmination of years of frustration and failure (Committee for Economic Development, 1987). Students who obtain low grades, fail subjects, and are retained in grade have a much higher probability of performing poorly and subsequently leaving school before high school graduation. Being retained in grade once increases a student's chance of dropping out of school by 40 to 50 percent; being held back twice increases the chance by 90 percent (Wheelock, 1986).

WHERE WE ARE

IN GRADUATING MIGRANT YOUTH FROM HIGH SCHOOL

Key Questions

1. What is the graduation rate and how has it changed over time?
2. What factors appear to increase the likelihood of dropping out?
3. What factors increase the likelihood that migrant students stay in school?

"Mrs. M says they don't leave Texas until school is out. They return to the home-base in October. She said the children start school in New York, and then go back to their TX school. She pre-enrolls them in TX so they have no problems when they arrive."

"I didn't finish school, but now I got kids that are doing pretty good in school. I's getting straight A's. The rest, well they were doing pretty good, but two of 'em got married, and he went up to high school a couple of years and then got involved with his girlfriend and they had to quit school and they never went back again. He don't have his GED, but he needs it bad. See, if you have that piece of paper, then you can get a real permanent job."

"Working in the fields is something very hard. I say to them, 'Here in this house, everyone, I want you to have a degree. I will know how to dress you, I will know how you are going to study, but you are going to have a career, in order that when tomorrow comes, you will have your degree, you will work in air conditioning in the shade, and you will not walk in the fields like I did.' This is what I say to them."

"But this drop out thing, for other kids, that's a tough one; a lot of times it's financial problems. If your family has financial problems, they may need you to drop out. You can see your family growing and little brothers and sisters running around all over the place, and there's pressure to help out. And also, they see their other friends with cars and clothes and they want them too. So they start to work instead."

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"I asked J if she minded moving with her family. She said, 'It bothered me to come into school late because it put me behind.' J told me that when she was in elementary school she would fall behind in reading mostly. She told me about the time they came back late from Illinois, and she was going to attend a school that she had never attended before here in Florida. When she went in to register, she was put in a classroom and tested. J said she did not know she was going to be tested, and she wasn't prepared. As a result, she failed the test. Since then, she was always placed on a lower level in reading."

"She says like she wouldn't wanna go to school over there (upstream), because she said she already learned over here what she's supposed to learn and she's almost out of school, and she's gonna get to (upstream state) and she's gonna be behind and she's afraid to fail. She'll be behind because whatever they're studying, they're way behind here, and they're way high over there already. She likes it though because if she goes to school up there and then comes back to (home-base town), she already knows everything that's going on up there. But she don't like it when she's gotta go over there, because they're way ahead and she's behind. And she gotta catch up. When she goes up to (upstream state), they're already way ahead. So they're not teaching them as much down here, that's the problem."

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Graduation Rate

Although the graduation rate is improving for migrant students and many are receiving diplomas through the High School Equivalency Program (HEP), local continuing education programs, and General Education Development (GED) programs, migrant youth have the lowest graduation rate of any population in our public schools. Documenting the graduation rate has proved to be a complicated process. The graduation rate for migrant students is estimated to range anywhere from 40 percent to 55 percent, depending on the measures and methods used to arrive at a rate.

Developing a national graduation rate formula for migrant students is a primary task of the National Project for Secondary Credit Exchange and Accrual, a project based in Texas and conducted under a Section 1203-funded cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Education. The initial phase of the project tracked a national cohort of 1983 sixth-graders in the Migrant Student Record Transfer System through the most likely graduation years, 1989 to 1991. A first year report on the progress of the project (Villareal, 1991) offers some insight on the complexity of following the national cohort to determine how many had graduated, dropped out, lost eligibility for migrant education services, or remained in school. Although a great deal of work remains to be done to determine a national graduation formula, some preliminary findings about the cohort provide a partial picture about how well we are doing in graduating migrant students from high school.

The best indicator of improvement in graduation of high school students is a rapid growth in the number of migrant students reaching 12th grade. Although this fact is more accurately described as

a hopeful trend than a graduation rate indicator, it offers considerable promise because many educators believe students who stay in school till their senior year are highly motivated to complete school.

The trend is dramatic: from 1984 to 1990, the number of migrant students enrolled in 12th grade has increased from 21,493 to 30,745, a jump of 43 percent. In the same period, the overall migrant student enrollment increased from 487,582 to 549,889, an increase of just under 13 percent.

Available data on the number of graduates is less sanguine, however. Of 10,867 students in the national sample who were tracked as far as 1989, only 43.8 percent had the "G" entered in MSRTS indicating graduation. The 4,765 confirmed graduates included 3,755 who graduated on time in 1989, 905 in 1990, and 105 in 1991.

More than 4,000 students who failed to complete their secondary education are served by the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) annually. The key component of HEP projects is academic instruction intended to ensure that participants obtain a GED. Seventy-five percent of HEP participants successfully completed the GED during the 1990-1991 school year.

Factors that Lead to Dropping Out

One of the most important measures of student progress is the extent they keep up with other children their age, being promoted each year to the next year. Research suggests that children who fall behind in grade level are substantially more likely to drop out of high school.

Migrant children tend to be older than their classmates, with an increasing proportion of students above the modal age in the grades as grade levels increase. Based on the 1990-1991 enrollment information on the Migrant Student Record Transfer System, about 32 percent school age students are one year behind grade level, and 11 percent are two or more years behind grade level.

Previous studies have estimated the number of overage children to be even higher. An analysis of data from the Migrant Student Record Transfer System and the Bureau of Census (Levy, 1989) revealed that 35 percent of migrant children who were enrolled in kindergarten in the 1988 school year were one or more years older than their age level peers. This 35 percent figure compares to only 4 percent of the general population of children below modal grade in 1986 (last available figures). Further, the analysis revealed that by third grade, 50 percent of migrant students enrolled were one or more years older than their peers.

The geographic mobility and frequent disruptions in schooling place migrant children at a significant risk of falling behind in grade level. Migrant children may be older than their classmates for a variety of reasons, including starting school at a later age, inappropriate placement when transferring to a new school, and/or being retained. However, retention is the major reason, and evidence indicates that many migrant children are being retained very early in their school careers. The number of migrant children retained in prekindergarten and kindergarten is significantly higher than for children in the general population (Levy, 1989).



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"Mr. G said they stopped moving so the children could go to one school and not have to be changing schools constantly. If you move them, they don't learn, they just miss too much. They need to study because if not, they are always going to be picking tomatoes."

Migrant Attitudes Towards Education

From: Joseph O. Pruitt Diaz, Robert T. Trotter, II, and Vidal A. Rivera, Jr.

Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1989

The Effects of Migration on Children: An Ethnographic Study.

As has been indicated earlier, the dropout rate among students who have repeated one or several grades is more than twice that among students who haven't stayed back. The connection between grade promotion and school leaving begins as early as kindergarten or first grade.

The consequences of mobility are harsh for high school students. Early spring departure and late fall entry remain major obstacles to migrant students in accruing credits and graduating. In some areas, students lose all spring semester credits if they miss final exams; they also arrive too late to be scheduled into necessary classes in the fall, or receive no fall credit because attendance policies restrict the number of days of school they can miss.

Credits earned by migrant students in receiving schools are not always accepted by the homebase and other schools they attend.

Each time migrant students enroll in a school in another state, the rules and curriculum for that state govern the students. They can be placed into courses that are not required for high school graduation in their homebase schools or can be placed into courses they do not need. A difficult hurdle for them is trying to get their home school to give them credit for coursework completed in another state. Decisions on acceptance of credits earned elsewhere are usually made by principals or counselors whose legal obligation is to insure that the requirements of their state or district are fully met. Consequently, a student may be denied credit or forced to repeat courses.

Fortunately, there are a number of agreements whereby homebase schools accept credits and partial credits earned by students during their temporary residence in other states. There are a few special projects and a few specially trained

counselors and secondary specialists who help coordinate the consolidation of credits earned in various locations. There is even a national computer network, the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), which can help in the documentation of credits wherever earned.

The National Project for Secondary Credit Exchange and Accrual based in Texas is developing a model for a system of credit exchange and accrual for secondary migrant youngsters. With satellite offices in each of the migrant streams (Eastern, Central and Western), the project also seeks to foster the development and expansion of innovative approaches to address the needs of secondary migrant youth and to raise their aspirations and accomplishments to high school graduation and beyond.

The extent to which schools screen students from school or retain them in early grades is a key factor many migrant students leave school without a diploma. Some small scale studies that asked migrant youth to look back on why they did not complete a high school education reveal other reasons why migrant students may drop out. The factors most often cited that contributed to decisions to leave school include: the feeling of not belonging and having no friends (Levy, 1988); lack of participation in extracurricular activities (Miller, 1980); being older than their classmates, finding school too difficult, and falling behind in classwork (Mattera, 1985); and the shortage of qualified teachers, vocational teachers, counselors, and other school personnel to work with non- and limited-English proficiency students (Diaz, Trotter, and Rivera, 1989).

Another factor most consistently linked with decisions to leave school before graduation has to do with financial reasons. Migrant labor provides access to money at an early age without the need for an education. For migrant families, working children may make the difference between mere survival and a successful season.

In an ethnographic study on the lifestyles of migrant children, Diaz, Trotter, and Rivera (1989) noted the decision-making power of migrant children to stay in school or drop out. "At the age of 15 or 16, many children were making as much money as adults working in the fields. For youth, money is a source of independence and social reward. If choice is being treated as an adult and getting praise in one environment, or being criticized for falling behind, getting bad grades, and being sent home in another, it is not too difficult to see why some migrant students opt out of school." Educational programs, especially summer programs, must recognize the ever-present need of migrant youth to assist their families financially by working and take this into account when planning programs.

Keeping Migrant Students in School

Teaching migrant students successfully is not easy, but neither is it mysterious. We know it is being done in a number of places by ordinary teachers in ordinary schools, often under extraordinary conditions. Migrant educators have been very inventive and creative in developing strategies, programs, and resources to help migrant students succeed in school and graduate.

The years from pre-school to high school graduation should be viewed as a continuum. From this vantage point, the difficulties and reverses suffered by young migrant

children, early in their school experience, can be identified and overcome as the youngster proceeds through school. In attempting to meet the wide range of needs among migrant students, states have developed a wide range of support systems that have been beneficial to helping keep migrant students in school. We focus on those that have proven effective for older migrant students.

Migrant education programs in many areas provide counseling and affective support to middle school and high school students. These counselors have various responsibilities, including getting the student to school and facilitating academic support, health needs, attendance at special programs and extracurricular activities, and home and school coordination. Migrant high school students when polled indicated that the single most important factor in contributing to their success was an adult who cared. This person can be the secondary school advisor. Programs to increase bonding of adolescents with responsible adults, such as "adopt-a-student" programs and other mentoring programs have been successful. Teachers, other site personnel, as well as members of the community have become involved in such programs.

Leadership programs on Saturdays and institutes lasting from a week to a month have all been successful in giving the migrant student the impetus to stay in school. Leadership seminars and summer institutes often take place on a college or university campus. Institutes are often focused on a particular area, i.e., language, computers, but almost all devote a great deal of time to

developing self-confidence, leadership skills and preparing the student for success in high school. Leadership programs that bring parents and students together have been successful in some areas. Both the student and parent receive the same information regarding the opportunities for the student's future, and they learn goal setting together.

Older youth often leave high school due to economic demands of the family. Work-study (or earn to learn) programs often provide just enough money to induce the student to stay in school. Some schools provide migrant students cooperative education experiences. Cooperative education refers to students undertaking a part-time job in conjunction with school. The hours of school and work are arranged flexibly so that the students can meet both sets of obligations. At the same time, the financial rewards help to determine the students from leaving school because of economic pressures. Evening programs and Saturday programs have assisted working youth in accruing credits for graduation.

Few of the innovations that have evolved in the quarter-century history of the Migrant Education Program seem to be so precisely suited to the needs of migrant students as the Portable Assisted Study Sequence, or PASS programs. These packaged courses, developed in California as a form of a correspondence course, enable migrant students to work for high school course credits wherever they



move. The student finishes courses at his or her own rate, seeking help when needed from school site staff, and a teacher tests the student at the completion of the course.

Different districts use PASS in different ways, but the process always begins with identifying a student as credit-deficient. The student can take the course after school, or in summer school, or can work on it at home at night. Students are enrolled in PASS only after it is determined that they are so far behind in credit accrual that they cannot graduate in four years.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Opportunities for Innovation

- Schools and migrant education must recognize the ever-present need for migrant youth to assist their families financially by working and the possibility that some students will need alternative learning environments. Until programs are offered which confront the reality of the world of work, which is integral to the life of every migrant youth, students will have difficulty attending traditional site-based programs. Programs must be flexible in terms of hours of operation and location so that they are convenient to students. For example, when students are working in the fields, evening programs are essential. Alternative locations, such as camp or community buildings, may not only be more accessible to the working student, but also lack association with previous negative schooling experiences.

- Coordination must continue to be a primary thrust in our efforts to serve migrant youth. Coordinated efforts open new options for migrant youth in the scope of academic services, vocational training and support services that can be offered. For example, a migrant secondary student may participate in a migrant education summer program in which he can earn credits, receive employability enhancement skills such as career education and possibly a stipend under JTPA 402, and obtain health education and screening services through Migrant Health.

Opportunities for Reflection

- Mentoring and peer tutoring programs help reach secondary migrant youth who need an extra boost to achieve academic success, those who are considering dropping out, or those who already have left school.
- Parents have a tremendous impact upon shaping students' attitude towards school and encouraging students to stay in school.

- While migrant education has developed many model programs throughout the nation for high school students, we need to expand partnerships with businesses and community-based organizations.
- If a youngster is not responding to a normal program, try something new. If that does not work, do something else.

Opportunities for Action

- Credits earned by migrant students in receiving states, through alternative programs like PASS or through summer school programs, must be accepted by the home base and other schools. Students must be given the opportunities to earn credit; mechanisms must be in place and used to transfer credit when earned; and systems must be created and implemented nationally to ensure that these credits are accepted and accrued toward students' graduation.



America 2000 Goals 3/4

GOAL 3

By the Year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

GOAL 4

By the Year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

Ten Basic Student Entitlements

The National Coalition of Advocates for Students

Entitlement 1: *Children are entitled to have parents, advocates, and concerned educators included in all decisions affecting their schooling.*

Entitlement 2: *Children are entitled to learn in an integrated, heterogeneous setting responsive to different learning styles and abilities.*

Entitlement 3: *Children are entitled to developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies that are comprehensive and culturally supportive.*

Entitlement 4: *Children are entitled to access to a common body of knowledge and the opportunity to acquire higher-order skills.*

Entitlement 5: *Children are entitled to a broadly based assessment of academic progress and grading structures that enhance individual strengths and potential.*

Entitlement 6: *Children are entitled to a broad range of support services that address individual needs.*

Entitlement 7: *Children are entitled to attend schools that are safe, attractive, and free of prejudice.*

Entitlement 8: *Children are entitled to attend school every day unless they pose a danger to other students or school staff.*

Entitlement 9: *Children are entitled to instruction by teachers who hold high expectations for all students and who are fully prepared to meet the challenge of diverse classrooms.*

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Expectations For Migrant Children And Youth

Migrant students should complete the elementary grades with mastery of critical skills in learning to read, write, compute and think.

Migrant students should complete the middle school grades able to reason critically and understand the relevance to their lives of the subject matter they are learning.

Migrant students entering high school should be able to complete their educations and graduate successfully.

Migrant students should be provided stimulating learning experiences in science, mathematics, and technology education as they proceed through their school years.

Every state department of education should have a successful comprehensive strategy for migrant children and youth that provides a process to bring about quality, equity, and congruence in their schooling.

WHAT WE KNOW

We know that all students, regardless of background, can learn. We also know that students do not progress at the same pace or learn in the same way.

We know that learning takes place when it is viewed as meaningful to a student's own life; learners feel that their teachers are committed to their success; and the school environment allows for differences in learning paces, methods and styles in order to be in harmony with the diverse needs and interests of the students.

We know that the transitions from early childhood to kindergarten, elementary school to middle and junior high programs, and eventually into high school are stressful for students as well as for their parents. Students who make successful transitions from one learning level to the next have an improved chance of successfully transitioning from school to work and/or further education.

We know that no single period of a child's development should be dealt with to the exclusion of others. But we also know that prevention is better than remediation. This belief undergirds our emphases on the early learning years of a migrant child's

schooling in the hope and expectation of increasing the odds for success as migrant children proceed through their school years. While stressing this, however, we know there is a need to provide support throughout a migrant student's school experience to help ease adjustments to new schools and transitions from one learning level to the next.

We know that all children have the right to attend schools in which they can progress and learn. Migrant students must not only hear that "all children can learn," they must feel that they are truly valued and that they can achieve academic success. This includes having teachers who are professionally trained, who are sensitive to the language, culture, and customs of the students they teach, and who appreciate the individual talents each student brings to the classroom.

WHERE WE ARE

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND CITIZENSHIP

Key Questions

1. Are migrant students improving in their mastery of basic and advanced skills?
2. Is there an increase in the number of migrant students taking challenging courses, including science and mathematics courses?
3. How do we know that schools are doing a good job and that migrant students are achieving?

Ten Basic Student Entitlements

(continued from page 17)

Entitlement 10: *Every child is entitled to an equal educational opportunity supported by provision of greater resources to schools serving low income, minority, or immigrant students.*

*The Good Common School:
Making the Vision Work For All
Children
National Coalition of Advocates
for Students
Boston, Massachusetts, 1991*

We begin this section of the report by stating we don't have "hard" answers to the three questions posed. A "Descriptive Study of the Chapter 1 Migrant Education Program" to be released by the United States Department of Education in early 1992, will provide information about services and how services are targeted to students. We suspect that the study will provide insights to addressing these questions. We believe, however, they are questions that state and local education agencies and schools ought to explore.

We know that many migrant students are successful in school, some are on the honor roll, and a few become valedictorians of their graduating classes. We have many success stories. However, far too many, over fifty-percent, don't make graduation.

The fact that a substantial proportion of migrant students leave school without a diploma says nothing about the capacity of these children to learn; rather, it says that the instructional methods and practices now in use are failing large numbers of students. Allowing large numbers of students to leave school with minimal skills insures them a life of poverty and dependence.

During the 1991 National Conference on Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Buffalo, New York, the NASDME Goals Task Force convened a series of forums to discuss the six national goals for education. These discussion forums allowed the task force to solicit the views of a wide spectrum of folk actively involved in the education of migrant students — parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, recruiters, and health providers. The participants in the forums that focused on the national education

goals related to student achievement, citizenship, and instruction in mathematics and science, declared that schools around the nation are not structured to address the needs of migrant students. The insights of the forum participants are particularly instructive.

- There is a lack of respect for the language and cultural differences of migrant students. The operating assumption in many schools is that different backgrounds and languages constitute deficits to be corrected rather than strengths upon which to build.
- Many schools migrant students attend, especially up-stream summer school programs, do not provide bilingual education or English as a second language program. Even where programs exist, they are understaffed and sometimes staffed with teachers who are not proficient in the native languages of the students.
- The education of too many migrant students is characterized by low expectations, inferior resources, and differential treatment.
- Some participants noted that in schools providing summer programs, the resources and materials available to all students during the regular school year are not made available to migrant students in summer. Often computers are put in storage, and books, science equipment, and other materials are locked in closets and storerooms.
- Instruction for migrant students is frequently limited to the basics. The instruction provided by the migrant education program supplements the regular instructional program. Some participants observed that in many schools, supplemental programs are often equated to "drill and practice" remediation.

Other participants noted, however, that the migrant education supplement provides opportunities for migrant students to be actively engaged in learning and to get the individual attention and help they need. Many participants pointed out that in many schools the regular classroom instruction is passive and over-uses the classroom lecture.

- School tracking and sorting functions begin early and are formalized in the middle grades, often locking students to pre-determined failure.
- Some school systems use retention policies for poor achievement without dealing with the additional distress and alienation it creates.
- Teachers in the middle learning years are usually trained as elementary or high school teachers, and have little knowledge of the instructional or developmental needs of young adolescents.

- At the high school level, large group instruction is common with little recognition of diverse learning styles and needs of students.

After almost a year of meetings at which the task force reviewed the comments of practitioners and parents from the Buffalo discussion forums, and studied many reports from around the country on the education of "at-risk" students, minority students, and migrant students, we reached consensus on four *essentials* in making schools more responsive to migrant students. *These essentials are:*

1. *Create an intensity of commitment to serving limited English proficient migrant students.*
2. *Eliminate ability grouping and tracking practices.*
3. *Promote alternative assessment methods.*
4. *Foster opportunities for science, mathematics, and technology in migrant education programs.*

Create an Intensity of Commitment to Serving Limited English Proficient Migrant Students

The limited English proficiency student population is of a significant size: ranging from 3.5 to 5.5 million for the nation and between 25 percent and 30 percent of all students in California and Texas (Quality Education for Minorities Project, 1990). According to 1990-1991 school year information in the the Migrant Student Record Transfer System, 77 percent of the Migrant Education Program population is Hispanic. Interpolating this statistic with U.S. Department of Labor statistics on seasonal agricultural workers in the United States, we can estimate that 50 percent of all migrant students' families are not native English speaking.

We know that Hispanic students currently lag behind both white and black students in academic achievement. According to a study of Hispanic education by the National Council of La Raza (De La Rosa and Maw, 1990), Hispanic children tend to enter school later and leave school earlier than their black or white counterparts, are less likely to attend nursery school or kindergarten, and have lower enrollment rates than black or white children up to age 6. The findings also show that Hispanic youth drop out of school earlier than black or white youth. By age 16, one in five Hispanic youth has left school without a diploma, compared to one in 16 black youth and one in 15 white youth. At ages 18 to 19, almost one-third of Hispanics are dropouts, compared to about one in six blacks and one in seven whites. Of all Hispanic groups, Mexican Americans have the lowest level of educational attainment.



We know that children with limited English proficiency, including both those whose native language is not English and those speaking non-standard English, have higher incidence of dropping out. In many cases, the lack of English proficiency which would enable a youngster to understand a math problem or analyze a short story, is the primary reason for poor academic performance. Hispanics represent 73 percent of all limited English proficient children (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1990). Some research suggests that Hispanics from non-English language backgrounds are more than three times as likely to drop out of school as Hispanics from English language backgrounds. They are also likely to be behind a grade level (Asher, 1986). Other research suggests that the combination of being poor, not speaking English, and being Hispanic all increase the likelihood of school failure and dropping out.

In recent years, immigrants from Mexico, Central America, Haiti, and other countries have entered the migrant labor force. The level of previous education and the type of educational methods used in immigrant migrant children's or their parent's country of origin can have an impact on children's success in English-speaking schools. For both native born and immigrant migrant children with limited English proficiency, many of the difficulties they have in succeeding in school and learning English may be explained by the differences in native language literacy skills and family educational background.

Children who already have strong oral and literacy skills in their first language have a tremendous advantage. Likewise, children whose parents are literate in their native language generally have an easier time mastering English (LaFontaine, 1988).

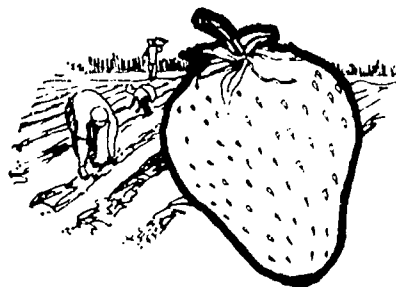
Limited English proficient migrant students need instruction that builds on their first language and moves them toward the development of proficiency in English. A longitudinal study recently released by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs indicates that bilingual education programs serve as the foundation for English-language acquisition by native Spanish speaking children and do not impede English language acquisition. Other findings of the longitudinal study indicate that teachers of both English Immersion and Early-Exit programs agree that limited English proficient students ideally should remain in the programs for more than three years. The report also states that children participating in programs that use native-language instruction should not be abruptly transferred into English-only programs (U.S. Department of Education 1990).

We don't have detailed information about how schools and/or migrant education programs serve — or do not serve — limited English proficient students. There is also a paucity of information on how migrant education coordinates these efforts at the state and local levels with bilingual education and ESL, vocational education, special education, and Chapter 1 and state compensatory education programs. We can glean, however, from other studies regarding the education of

language minority English proficient students (e.g. Council of Chief State School Officers, 1990), that, as in the general population, large numbers of limited English speaking migrant students do not receive the special services they need to succeed in school. Some do not receive any at all. This may be particularly true in the up-stream rural communities where migrant workers travel. Many rural communities and schools lack the bilingual staff and expertise to address the needs of these students. Many states and school districts have made neither adequate financial or programmatic commitments to bilingual education and English as a second language programs. In those states that have enacted new legislation and increased funding to facilitate implementation of programs for limited English proficient students, the majority of students in need of these services do not receive them (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1990).

Eliminate Ability Grouping and Tracking Practices

A number of questionable grouping practices have resulted from the downward push of the curriculum and the upward push to get younger and younger children to learn more and more. These practices affect children when they begin kindergarten or first grade. They result in many children failing before ever being given the opportunity to succeed. As has already been noted, the number of



migrant children retained in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten is significantly higher than children in the general population. "Unready" kindergarten migrant children are being sorted out and placed in "transitional" classes that provide activities that are to better prepare students for first grade. Transitional programs exclude young children from wider models of society that education is supposed to bring to them. These extra-year programs, tied to only academic achievement as the measure of student growth, widen the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged youngsters (Schorr & Schorr, 1988).

Segregation through ability grouping and retention begins very early in children's school careers. Research provides no compelling evidence that young children learn more or better in homogeneous groups (Slavin, 1986). Homogeneous grouping may, in fact, place low ability children at risk because it deprives them of the examples and stimulation that classes of mixed ability and achievement affords. Further, it may communicate low expectations that, in turn, lead to self-fulfilling prophecy (Slavin, 1986; Slavin, Karweit, Madden, 1989). Once placed in lower tracks, few students move up.

Promote Alternative Assessment Methods

One unfortunate outcome of the educational reform activities of the past decade has been the over-reliance on standardized test scores as an indicator of student success. This approach has had a ripple effect all the way down to the classroom level where teachers must

sometimes choose between offering instruction for higher-level thinking skills and providing basic skills instruction in tested areas. Taken to the extreme, some schools and teachers have begun "teaching to the test" in order to improve their scores.

Many studies have indicated that minority students do not do as well on standardized tests. The debate continues as to whether this is due to cultural and linguistic biases which are inherent in the test instruments themselves or whether it is attributable to the quality of instruction. Regardless of either factor, the fact remains that teachers, counselors, and parents need assistance with preparing students for the testing process and interpreting test results once the tests have been administered.

"Authentic," "alternative," and "performance" are all terms applied to emerging assessment techniques. Whatever name they go by, their common denominator is that they call on students to apply their thinking and reasoning skills to generate often — elaborate responses to the problems put before them.

In many of these testing situations, there are multiple "correct" answers; in almost none of them is the student forced to select from a list of pre-specified multiple-choice alternatives. Extended writing assignments, hands-on science assessments, student portfolios, and group projects must be further developed as alternatives to the traditional testing practices.



We believe that these new assessment strategies can develop much richer insights into the skills and competencies of migrant students. An outgrowth of portfolio assessments for migrant students could be students carrying "their" portfolios to the next school to demonstrate to teachers their competencies and accomplishments thus far in their education.

Expand Opportunities in Science, Mathematics, and Technology in the Migrant Education Program

In an increasing global society it is critical for migrant students to be proficient in science and mathematics. Mastery of skills and enlightened thinking will enable migrant students to not only adapt to work changes, but also play an active role as society forges ahead. A foundation limited to "the basics" will not allow migrants to compete effectively.

We believe that all students should have access to rigorous and inspiring curriculum that moves them quickly into challenging material rather than dwelling on repetitive instruction at the introductory level. Research indicates that children learn science best when they are able to do experiments so they can witness "science in action." Numerous studies of mathematics achievement at different grade and ability levels show that children benefit when real objects or "manipulatives" are used as aids in learning mathematics.

There are a number of promising approaches that can be used to expand math and science opportunities for migrant youngsters, including take-home computers, take-home science experiment kits, and extracurricular activities such as computer club, science olympiad, and math challenge group. Many schools have organized family math programs.

The family math course gives parents and their children opportunities to engage in activities that reinforce and supplement the school mathematics curriculum. The purpose is to encourage more students to go on to advanced math. Classes are taught by a teacher, parent, or community worker in a school, church, or home, usually grouped by grade levels. There is an emphasis on the importance of math to future learning and work.

Another alternative for giving migrant students extra assistance in math and science is the use of summer sessions. In order to avoid the problem of student burnout by providing too much schooling — or schooling that is a mirror image of the regular school program — an effort could be made to make summer schools qualitatively different. The focus could be on hands-on science and math activities. Each day could combine field trips, movies, or other special events with learning sessions. Certain sessions could be combined with outdoor education experiences. At the same time, much of the instruction could be made more relaxing through tutorial and group sessions, and assisted instruction.

Since 1988, 237 migrant students in grade four through twelve have traveled to the U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. Participation in the aerospace programs offers students the opportunity to apply their math and science knowledge to hands-on learning situations. Students experience real NASA training equipment. They learn of the past and inquire of the future while discussing topics of interest with astronauts or other professionals in the aerospace industry. They learn first hand of the diverse career options which await them in the aerospace field.

In 1988 the state of Oregon selected a student named Anna Cherapanov as one of its migrant education students to travel to Huntsville for the Space Academy Program. Anna appeared in the closing moments of a Space Camp marketing video created that summer. The following summer Anna traveled with Deborah Barnardt to the Soviet Union representing U.S. Space Camp. In 1990 Anna was recruited by Space Camp to work as a camp counselor for the summer. In both 1989 and 1990 Anna used her Russian language skills to assist Space Camp staff with interpretation.

Anna Cherapanov's experiences were unique. Her talents are not. There are migrant students across the country who represent our program with similar ability.

In the past three years the state of Pennsylvania has sent three teachers and fourteen students to Space Camp. With the collaboration of those teachers and students, the Project Coordinator at the State Department of Education has designed and implemented a unique program to follow the Huntsville experience. Throughout the school year the "team" presents space technology presentations to various schools that serve migrant students. The audiences include non-migrant as well as migrant youth. Thus far more than forty programs have been presented to approximately three thousand students statewide.

The Pennsylvania program is representative of talented educators in many states who are extending the Space Camp experience so that others will learn through the experiences of classmates and dream of their own Space Camp experience and/or aerospace career.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Opportunities for Innovation

We challenge schools and migrant education programs to develop programs for migrant students that include this **BAKER'S DOZEN OF SPECIFIC ELEMENTS FOR EDUCATING MIGRANT CHILDREN.**

1. An emphasis on prevention of learning problems and early intensive intervention when learning problems arise, rather than on long-term remedial or special education services;
2. Use instructional methods that have proven successful with disadvantaged students, including computer-assisted instruction and continuous progress programs. Provide non-threatening, positive learning environments which allow for experimentation, trial and error, frequent rewards, and celebrations of success. Feedback on performance of assigned tasks should be frequent and allow for assistance in examining mistakes and failures in a constructive manner without personal ridicule;
3. Provide top quality staff development, including demonstrations, coaching and in-class follow up;
4. Promote pedagogy that is sensitive to the diverse backgrounds of migrant students, whether or not that diversity is based on culture, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or learning style. This approach of culturally-sensitive pedagogy finds and uses the strengths and backgrounds of migrant students to enhance their school experience;
5. Create an intensity of commitment to serving migrant children of limited English proficiency by articulating their needs and the importance of meeting them;
6. Actively involve parents as partners in their children's school success;
7. Encourage and assist school staff and other members of the community to become mentors;
8. Form teacher teams to work together and plan together to enhance students' development;
9. Develop experimental hands-on learning experiences to make learning more exciting, relevant and focused on student futures in college or employment;
10. Eliminate rigid tracking and grouping; use cooperative learning, peer tutoring techniques; promote alternative assessment such as student portfolio and group projects;
11. Increase exposure to a broad range of cultural, social, and work environments. Additional experiences with occupations and workers outside the migrant student's experiential realm would support needed career exploration;
12. Provide curriculum and counseling focus on post-secondary education or employment; and
13. Create partnership with community agencies to leverage additional or redirected resources for family support, health, nutrition and other services to children, as well as to provide before- and after-school programs and summer programs.

Opportunities for Reflection

- Mobilize students, staff, and parents around a vision of a school in which all students can achieve.
- Migrant students not only can and do graduate from high schools, but graduate with honors.
- Since second-language acquisition is enhanced when the student is literate in his or her native language, courses similar to Spanish for Speakers of Spanish must be developed and offered in such languages as Creole/Haitian, Vietnamese, etc., to assist immigrant migrant students in becoming speakers of English.
- Develop "in-school" extracurricular activities that encourage migrant students' participation in activities that emphasize mathematics and science, i.e. computer club, science olympiad, math challenge group.
- Send a migrant student to Space Camp.



Opportunities for Action

- Efforts should be made by the U.S. Office of Migrant Education and NASDME to obtain current, accurate information about how migrant education programs serve — or do not serve — limited English proficient students. We believe it is particularly important to pursue better information on the degree to which LEP migrant students are receiving services under programs other than bilingual education and ESL, on coordination of these services within state education agencies, and whether the services received are appropriate to the youngsters' needs. We also need information about effective and promising practices in delivering services to LEP migrant students in up-stream summer migrant programs where lack of expertise on the local level may be a problem.
- Teachers and health providers need to have current and useful information in order to properly assess educational needs, properly place children and treat health problems. Efforts to make information transferred, through the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), more useful and timely are under way. However, practitioners at the local education level must be trained to use the system and they must have access to hardware and software that will enable them to interact directly with the MSRTS. We must ensure that the system is user friendly and is used.



America 2000 Goal 5

By the Year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

"The successful (youth) will enter (the workforce) with self-esteem and self-confidence. Home environment is probably the single most important contributor or deterrent to preparation for the world of work. He or she will have been encouraged from infancy to try new experiences and succeed in them. Parents, siblings, and other influential people in his or her life will have been encouraging and the environment will have offered opportunities to experiment and to succeed, and therefore to presume further success . . . It is in the family circle that most children and youth receive the acculturation that more than anything else determines their ultimate success or failure in the labor market . . . a youth cannot perceive himself or herself in an occupation or a work role of which the youth is unaware. Whether the child perceives employment to be an appropriate and essential role will effect how the youth approaches the labor market. If one is to assist youth to improve their attitudes toward work and to make appropriate decisions related to work, not just to obtain an immediate job but to increase chances for a successful working career, understanding the process of career development is necessary."

(Youth Transition from Adolescence to the World of Work, 1987)

Expectations For Migrant Children And Youth

The academic achievement of migrant students should be at a level that will enable them, upon graduation from high school, to be prepared for post-secondary education, employment, or both.

Migrant students who do not choose college should be provided school-to-work transition experiences so they leave high school prepared with the skills necessary to participate productively in the world of work and with the foundation required to upgrade their skills and advance their employment and career opportunities.

Adults and out-of-school migrant youth should be provided quality experiences and opportunities to improve their literacy, basic education, and problem solving skills.

WHAT WE KNOW

We know that jobs are changing. In the workplace, technology and global competition demand an American labor force with literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving abilities. The futurists predict that over 75 percent of the new jobs in the year 2000 will require at least a high school education. "Increasingly, America's future depends more on brains and less on manual labor" (National Alliance for Business Report, 1988).

We know the workforce is changing. New entrants into the workforce are likely to be women or racial or ethnic minorities, many of whom may have been less well-served by the educational system and therefore may lack the skills required by an increasingly complex workplace. The population and the workforce will be older, while the pool of young workers joining the labor force will decrease (Johnston and Packer, 1987).

We know that the largest increase in the population and the workforce will be represented by immigrants and other adults for whom English is a second language and many of whom lack literacy skills in their own language. By the year 2000, an estimated 17.4 million limited English proficient adults will be living in the United States. Immigrants will make up 29 percent of the new entrants into the labor force between now and the year 2000 — twice their current share (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

We know that among the most educationally disadvantaged groups in the United States are migrant farmworkers. The majority are between 25 and 44 years old and have an average of 5.5 years of schooling (Slaughter and Associates, 1991). Many are not literate in their native language, which is usually Spanish. More are added to this pool each year as a result of immigration. Many of their children have minimal literacy skills; many drop out of school and don't acquire the reading, computing and problem-solving skills required to fill the jobs of tomorrow and to share in the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship.

WHERE WE ARE

IN ASSISTING MIGRANT STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO ACQUIRE LITERACY AND JOB SKILLS

Key Questions

1. Do migrant students who are unable to complete their secondary education have alternative programs at their disposal? Do these programs provide intensive and competency-based training to bridge the gap between the students' skills and skills required by the job market?
2. Have migrant student participation rates in postsecondary programs increased?
3. Where do migrant adults go to gain knowledge and skills? Are programs adequate and accessible?

Reconnecting Migrant Youth

Migrant high school dropouts need opportunities to drop back in. They are unlikely to drop back into the same school under the same conditions they left. They need alternative schools, work-study programs, cooperative education programs or high school equivalency programs (GED). Schools must be willing to use night schools, home study courses, supplementary correspondence courses, and tutorial sessions. Further, it may often be necessary for the schools to go to the students, rather than expecting students to come to the school. The need for these options far exceeds their availability.

The GED has long been an accepted route to new careers and colleges for high school dropouts. This has been especially true for migrants. Currently, there are 23 High School Equivalency Programs (HEP) around the country that are designed to serve migrants between ages 17 and 21, who have not finished high school and are not now attending high school. These programs served 4,075 students during the 1990-1991 program year. Around 75 percent of these students received their GED. HEP's are usually located on university campuses to allow students to explore options for post secondary education and for careers. Supportive services are also available as needed.

Any alternatives to help migrant students remain in school or re-enter school must help them identify their skills and interests, understand the job market, make short-run or long range career plans, and increase higher math, language, and reasoning capabilities required for today's workplace. Guidance, counseling, and other support programs contribute to a student's transitioning to the world of work by fostering a learning environment where students acquire the needed health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career development competencies. Mastering these competencies are critical for student transitioning throughout a lifetime.

Postsecondary Opportunities

We know that migrant high school graduates are entering two- and four-year postsecondary institutions. However, there is little information available about how many are entering these institutions and how many successfully complete their studies.

The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) supports migrant students entering or wishing to enter the university, by providing students with tutorial assistance, campus orientation (buddies), help with applications for financial assistance and other special programs or services. The CAMP program provides counseling and academic assistance and also funds a limited number of part-time jobs on campus to assist students with financial need. There are 7 CAMP programs around the country. In the 1990-1991 program year, these programs served 335 students. The CAMP program, unlike many other federally funded programs, enjoys an 81 percent success rate in freshman year completions.

Adult Migrant Education Programs

A recent study estimated that there are 1,661,875 migrant farmworkers in the United States (Migrant Health Program, 1990) who follow the crops across the country, returning to home states or home countries for the winter harvest season. Mobility affects every aspect of the lives and learning of migrant workers. A study conducted for the U.S. Department of Education (Slaughter and Associates, 1991) provides some insights on the nature of adult migrant education.

- Traditional adult education programs and curricula are inappropriate for farmworkers, primarily because of their mobility and need for a wide range of services.
- The vast majority of adult migrant farmworkers do not speak English and many are illiterate in any language. Therefore, educational programs must be able to provide initial instruction in the native language; then follow with bilingual instruction; and finally English only instruction. This process helps acculturate the farmworkers while facilitating attainment of functional literacy.
- Less than 5 percent of the national farmworker population is served under JTPA, Title IV, Section 402, despite being specially targeted for employment and training services.
- The primary education program intended to serve adult migrant farmworkers and immigrants, as promulgated in the Adult Education Act, has yet to be funded.
- The functions of linking, coordinating, and ensuring non-duplication of services are generally left to isolated and underfunded nonprofit community-based organizations.



In addition, the study found that the definitive adult migrant farmworker education program does not exist, but that several programs offer useful and effective models. Traditional adult education programs and curricula are inappropriate for farmworkers, primarily because of their mobility and need for a wide range of support services. The more effective programs provide a variety of individualized educational and support services that are specifically designed to meet their special needs. The report concludes that migrant farmworkers cannot work their way out of poverty. Their only way out is through education and training, followed by well paid, stable employment.

Effective literacy education programs for adult migrants must be sensitive to the particular educational challenges facing migrant farmworkers. Too often migrant adults, many of whom are unaccustomed to formal schooling, must learn the systems of each new program and often must undergo repetitive assessment and entry procedures. Moreover, no national record system exists to track the progress of adults. The Migrant Student Record Transfer System, used to track elementary and high school students, is not available for adults.

Those migrant workers who are undocumented are often afraid to apply to programs, even when they are eligible. With the Special Agricultural Workers' (SAW) legalization program, many farmworkers had access to literacy education through the amnesty education programs administered through SLIAG (State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant). However, literacy programs operating under SLIAG are not reimbursed for teaching undocumented workers, and not all programs are ready to receive the influx of learners with low levels of literacy (Bartlett and Vargas, 1991).

Almost all providers of literacy education for adults agree that programs must be designed around the needs of the learner. Traditional programs that are text-oriented, test-managed, and teacher-controlled are unlikely to meet the needs of migrant learners who have little experience with formal education, may lack self-confidence in educational settings, and must realize success quickly. Participatory or learner-centered programs that identify and build on the experience of the learner, involve learners in setting individual and program goals, and employ confidence-building assessments have a greater chance of success (Bartlett and Vargas, 1991).

In addition, instructors in adult literacy classes are expected to have specialized professional competencies and knowledge of literacy teaching principles and methodology. Language and literacy instructors in adult ESL programs should be bilingual and sensitive to the values and cultures of their students.

Family Literacy Programs

In recent years, there has been a shift from providing literacy instruction to individuals to a focus on instruction to families. The initial thrust for family centered programs grew from experiences and research showing that parents' skills and practices influence the school achievement of their children. Family literacy programs focus on parent and child, and are designed to attack the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy. These programs ideally include literacy and parenting education for adults, pre-reading and literacy programs for children, and opportunities for parent and child interaction.

We believe that family centered programs such as Even Start offers promise of addressing the literacy crises in the nation through an integrative approach to adult and early childhood education. We also believe that such programs offer hope of breaking the cycle of poverty for migrant children and their families. Though underfunded, Even Start has the potential for supporting family literacy initiatives that complement education reform in the states.



WHAT WE CAN DO

Opportunities for Innovation

- We challenge schools and migrant education programs to establish family literacy programs modeled after Even Start that integrate early childhood, adult basic skills training, and parenting education. Funding and resources for such initiatives could be shared by adult basic education (ABE) under the Adult Education Act, including adult ESL; JTPA 402 programs; local voluntary councils or groups affiliated with Literacy Volunteers of America or Lauback Literacy International; Migrant Head Start; Migrant Health; and local health, social and community agencies. An integrated program must include support services such as transportation, child care, food assistance, health care, and when appropriate immigration and legal assistance.

- We challenge schools and migrant education programs to promote opportunities for migrant high school dropouts to drop back in through such alternatives as work-study programs, cooperative education programs, night schools, tutorial sessions, and high school equivalency programs. These programs must be capable of providing intensive and competency-based training to prepare migrant students for employment and/or continuing education.

Opportunities for Reflection

- Promote effective use of state mandated dropout programs to reach migrant youth.
- Solicit the involvement of the business community to provide educational services and job training experiences for dropouts.

- Initiate a local literacy volunteer corp for migrant workers.
- Parents and children working together in a shared learning experience will reinforce each other and yield greater literacy skills.
- Identify all programs available to the state for funding literacy efforts for migrant families.

Opportunities for Action

- Expand Even Start. Increased federal funding of this program would substantially increase literacy education for migrant children and their families.



America 2000 Goal 6

By the Year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Expectations For Migrant Children And Youth

Migrant children should attend schools that are free of drugs and alcohol and where students are well nourished and healthy, feel safe, and learn in a supportive and caring environment.

WHAT WE KNOW

We know that in order to learn, children must be healthy. They must be fed and rested and secure.

We know that a "poor self-image" and "poor self-esteem" are often cited as key causes of dropping out of school, substance abuse, and under-achievement. Positive self-esteem must be engendered and nurtured throughout schooling in order for individuals to reach their full potential.

WHERE WE ARE

NURTURING A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT

Key Questions

1. What kinds of resource and support are available to migrant children that help nurture a healthy, safe, and caring school environment?
2. How can the migrant education program assist in drug and alcohol education?

School-Based Health Services

Providing school-based health services is one part of an overall effort to establish schools as healthy environments. The health concerns of migrant children are painfully evident. Migrant workers and their children experience different health problems from those of the general population. Children are exposed to pesticides, hazardous equipment, and poor living conditions. As a result they are at high risk of such disorders as dermatitis, parasitic disease, anemia, respiratory problems, sprains and strains, and injury. Dental disease is a major problem among children (Dever, 1991). Often parents have a poor understanding of the importance of basic preventive health care. In addition, children from families who have immigrated from other countries with limited health care facilities often times have little or no experience with inoculations and regular examinations.

Basic to educating migrant children is the need to provide them and their families health care services. Improved collaboration among schools and community health services is needed. Far too often students and their families fail to connect with community health programs and migrant health clinics. An effective solution is to bring together health organizations with the schools to share responsibilities and resources. Co-locating health services at or near the school where they are most likely to be used by children and their families would be an important step toward improving the delivery of services. This strategy is also aligned with other strategies we have suggested for using schools as centers for the delivery of family services.

Health education is important as well. Children must begin at an early age to learn more about health, nutrition, and hygiene. Students must learn the value of preventive health and develop the knowledge to use existing health care system. Health educators and migrant education funded staff can provide migrant children and their parents awareness about programs and issues concerning human sexuality, occupational health and safety, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, substance abuse, and dental care.

The migrant education program can provide supplementary health care services that augment existing resources available through other agencies and resources in the community. Because migrant families do not have health or accident insurance, the migrant education program can offer migrant children at least minimum protection by providing them accident insurance.

Student Support System

The cumulative effects of low achievement, unhealthy and unsafe environments, poor nutrition, and unsound health practices have a profoundly detrimental impact on students' learning. Research shows that serious problems in personal and school adjustment are strongly related to the early onset of abuse of alcohol or other drugs, dropping out, and teenage pregnancy. Many migrant children and adolescents in our schools are under enormous stress, exacerbated by difficulties at home and in school.

Services that help build student moral and motivation are what make possible more demanding cognitive work. The success of early intervention programs with addressing cognitive problems must be translated to address the affective domain. The emphasis on basic skills and competency-based instruction should be balanced with programs that enhance self-esteem and self-awareness.

Few elementary and middle schools have adequate guidance and other pupil services staff. Pupil services interventions provide student assistance with health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career goals. School counseling, health services, teacher advocacy, peer counseling, and case management are all examples of valuable school-based intervention practices. In addition, in many schools, pupil

services personnel, particularly school counselors, serve as consultants to teachers, train students and staff in mediation techniques, and teach courses on interpersonal and personal skill developments.

It is extremely important that migrant youngsters have guidance counseling services in the elementary school years. Students who are behind in school suffer from problems with self-esteem; they may lack self-confidence to overcome the negative influences that confront them. The problem of school dropouts has been linked to lack of counseling at the middle school or junior high level. Counselors can play a key role in promoting supportive and caring learning environments for students. Classroom teachers should work together with guidance counselors, school psychologists, and other pupil services personnel.

Drug Education

Because of the increasingly serious nature of the drug epidemic during the past few years, schools around the nation have begun a variety of awareness programs which focus on empowering students to resist negative peer pressure related to drugs and other substance abuse. There has also been a growing recognition of the importance of expanding efforts beyond the awareness stage to more intensive education and treatment, even at the early grade levels. There is greater emphasis on smoking as the most basic form of substance abuse.

Unfortunately, many students live and function in social environments where the effect of their exposure to the drug culture exceeds the experiences and training of the teachers and other staff with whom they come into contact. Indeed, many political and community



leaders and substance-abuse experts cite "treating the root causes" of substance-abuse as the only viable form of prevention. Clearly, those persons working within the public schools require the support and assistance of other agencies and community groups to develop successful programs which "treat" the many facets of substance abuse. Likewise, the effectiveness of declaring Drug Free Zones around school buildings will be limited without collaboration among the various governmental agencies.

Teachers don't often have the time or expertise to make appropriate decisions or referrals. Frequent moves also impede follow up drug treatment for families and/or their children. Trained migrant education personnel such as social workers, nurses, and counselors can work with students and parents to encourage and support responsible behaviors. The migrant education program along with migrant health and social services programs can provide drug awareness and education programs in migrant camps and other communities where migrants live. Schools and the migrant education program can collaborate with counselors, parents, health care providers and enforcement agencies in developing outreach and treatment programs for migrant students. Schools and the migrant education program can provide alternative recreation programs after school, at night, or on weekends.

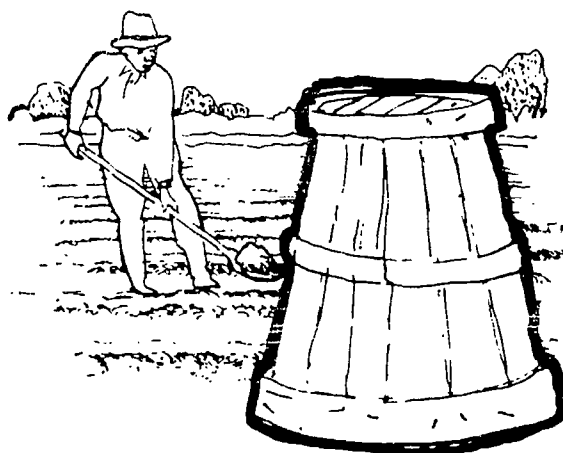
WHAT WE CAN DO

Opportunities for Innovation

- Schools and migrant education programs should work with health agencies and migrant advocacy groups to develop prevention programs and activities targeted to migrant workers that promote a drug-free life style, strengthen families, create options through education and training, and enable migrant communities to effectively address their own substance abuse problems.
- Promote the hiring of elementary school counselors to work with children and their families. Counselors and other pupil services staff should be sensitive to the values and cultures of migrant children, and where appropriate, be bilingual.

Opportunities for Reflection

- Explore sources of funding for incentive grants for programs and materials related to drug and alcohol abuse.
- Develop school-based drug prevention programs beyond "Just Say No" which emphasize education and treatment and begin in early childhood.
- To maintain a disciplined environment conducive to learning, use alternatives to traditional disciplinary practices, such as in-school detention. Some kinds of punishment can inadvertently reward misbehavior, punishment of student absenteeism by suspension from school is an example. In such a situation, an in-school suspension program or weekend class in which students are supervised in academic work may be a far more appropriate penalty.



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